NEWS RELEASE

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Hampton/NASA steam plant wins energy award

The Hampton/NASA Steam Plant recently won a 2012 Federal Energy and Water Management Award, a highly competitive award for which federal agencies across the nation compete. NASA Langley also won an award for its new sustainable headquarters building at NASA's Langley Research Center.

Each year the U.S. Department of Energy sponsors the Federal Energy and Water Management Awards to honor individuals and organizations making significant contributions to the efficient use of energy and water resources.

These awards are a first for the Hampton/NASA Steam Plant and NASA Langley. In fact, in the past 11 years, only four NASA teams have ever won, and this year NASA Langley achieved the only winning NASA submissions.

The Hampton/NASA Steam Plant, built in 1980, generates energy for Langley Research Center by burning trash from Hampton, NASA Langley, Langley Air Force Base and the Newport News shipyard. The facility, located on Langley property, is run by city employees.

How does it work? City refuse trucks deliver loads of trash to the plant, which feeds the materials into a furnace system. The 2,200 degree flame it creates fires a pair of boilers that provide steam to Langley Research Center, which is used for heating and cooling and research operations in the center's wind tunnels. The ash that results is chemically inert, creates no landfill gases and uses about one-tenth the landfill space as its original form. It is disposed of at the Bethel Landfill.

"It's a win-win situation for both the City of Hampton and Langley Research Center," said John MacDonald, plant manager. "The plant generates steam for the center, which is cheaper and cleaner than natural gas, and the city receives payment from NASA for the steam. The plant also reduces household waste by 88 percent, which means less trash in our landfill."

Last year, Langley Research Center implemented an initiative to increase use of steam produced at the Hampton/NASA steam plant, and to reduce the use of steam produced at Langley's fossil fuel-powered plant. As a result, Langley attained a 40 percent reduction in center-wide natural gas consumption in FY 2011, saving more than $500,000. Water consumption for steam production fell by 2 million gallons – a 1.6 percent reduction, which helped Langley meet federally-mandated reduction goals. The program also reduced Langley's greenhouse gas emissions.

The program has been adopted and is expected to maintain this level of savings during upcoming years, with additional savings possible.

“The success of this program is a direct reflection of the increased awareness and engagement of the City of Hampton and NASA Langley’s operations and maintenance staffs, as well as the close partnering and communications of the management of both plants and the buy-in of the researchers involved,” said Steve Bollman, manager for Langley’s Plant and Facility Operations.

Awards will be presented to the winners of the 2012 Federal Energy and Water Management Awards at the Mayflower Renaissance Hotel in Washington, D.C. in October.

For more information, visit http://www.nasa.gov/centers/langley/news/researchernews/rn_FEMP.html.

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